

THE
ORIGIN AND OBJECT
OF
CIVIL GOVERNMENT,
,
ACCORDING TO THE VIEWS OF
THE
SOCIETY OF FRIENDS



PHILADELPHIA:

PUBLISHED BY THE TRACT ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS,
AND TO BE HAD AT THEIR DEPOSITORY,
NO. 50, NORTH FOURTH STREET.

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THE enlightening influence of active faith, even in the conduct of the affairs of this life, has long been acknowledged. Is it not in the general want of this, that we may discover the cause why, notwithstanding so many generations have passed since the subject has claimed the attention of mankind, and so many volumes have been written about it; the true origin and legitimate object of government, seem still to be very imperfectly understood by the majority of men and legislators? All the existing governments of Christendom are guilty of many absurdities, follies, and even deeds of wickedness, and some of the leading principles of the policy which controls them, are in direct contradiction to those of the Christian religion, and to the reasonable rights of men. But little progress in political knowledge appears to have been made since the days of Penn; and, indeed, if the frame of government established by him were to be taken as the standard of the times in which he lived, the movement, in practice at least, would seem to have been backward. We learn, however, that Penn was much in advance of his age, and that it was because a large proportion of the community which he founded, and upon which his government, under Divine Providence, depended for support, was greatly behind him in Christian knowledge and purity of purpose, that the noble political institutions to which he was instrumental in giving birth, were so soon violated, and in a great degree destroyed. A pure government can only be sustained by a pure people. This is a truth which mankind have continually forgotten. They have, in various ages, when the measures of government have become more oppressive than they were willing to bear, sought relief in violent remedies. Instead of going to the root of the evil, and attempting to destroy its grand though hidden and remote cause, which they might have found in their own moral deterioration, they have contented themselves with forcibly demolishing that which was but an effect of their own indirect agency—political oppression, the result of national corruption. The consequence has been a constant recurrence of the evil: for the bitter fountain will still continue to give forth bitter waters.

But such is the perversity of the human mind, when unenlightened by a higher influence than reason, that it resists the convictions which experience should force upon it, and ever seeks for the cure of the evils under which it suffers in some fallacious and insufficient expedient. History is filled with examples of this, and future times may witness yet more extraordinary fruits

of the same kind, should the propagators of certain modern theories be permitted to succeed in the general diffusion of their anarchical opinions. They have observed that one form of government after another, has failed in fulfilling the hopes of good men; that many unchristian practices and violations of the plain principles of justice and humanity, are not only sanctioned, but actively promoted by them, and have hence concluded most unreasonably and irreligiously too, that such abuses are inseparable from civil government, and that the only cure is in the extermination of every form of it.

And, strange to tell, on that continent, and in that very nation, where Penn so successfully carried into practice his enlightened views, the moral use, and the Divine authority of civil government are called in question. Some have even pretended to base these opinions on the acknowledged principles of the religious society of which that wise legislator was so eminent a member. What a perversion of the orderly doctrines of that society this is, would seem to be sufficiently obvious on the mere statement of the fact; but a very slight examination of their written testimonials on the subject, will suffice to settle the question as to what their sentiments really were, beyond dispute or cavil. And so just and consistent with the doctrines of the Gospel were their ideas of civil government, it may, perhaps, not be altogether useless at this time, to attempt in a brief and simple way to state them. They will be found to offer a wide contrast to the political theories now popular: and although the forms of government established in New Jersey and Pennsylvania by Friends, may not have been in all their details adapted to the present needs of society, their prominent features, springing from immutable principles of truth, the same in all countries and in every age, might be profitably studied by the busy spirits of our day; and happy would it be for our countrymen were they more generally understood and appreciated.

As it may not be thought a satisfactory vindication of the Society to exhibit only the views of Penn, or of those colonists who followed him, or of those who before him planted a political community in New Jersey; let us begin with the official declarations of the Society, and with those of some of its approved writers. We shall learn from these sources, that the position taken by the original Friends, was not merely that of a meek and resigned submission to government as an evil to be endured, as some of these wild speculators have ventured to assert was the case with them, and even with the apostles; but that it was a hearty approbation and support, so far as conscience permitted, of the authorities placed over them.

Probably, the idea that Friends were inimical to government, arose in part, formerly, as perhaps it may now, from the position they have ever maintained, that God alone is sovereign Lord of conscience, and that no earthly power can, of right, assume dominion over it. Yet when the requisitions of law have contravened the dictates of conscience, they have always held themselves bound to bear the penalty; though not without the privilege of remonstrance, and the use of all peaceable and Christian

methods to obtain relief. For want of appreciating the distinction they made between active and passive obedience; christian and unchristian resistance; their opponents sometimes suspected and charged them with hostility to civil magistracy. But more frequently they were accused of disloyalty to the ruling powers, arising from a supposed preference for other men or modes of government. The vindications which, from time to time, were drawn from them by such unjust and injurious imputations, furnish us with the materials for rebutting the repetition of them now.

It was with secret designs to substitute one form of government for another that they were most commonly accused, and it was to repel such charges, as well as to testify their allegiance, that they often addressed the supreme magistrate, either on a new accession to the throne, or on the occurrence of any event affecting its stability. In these addresses we find expressions exhibiting very distinctly the estimation in which they held civil government. Take, for example, some of early date recorded by Sewell and Gough. In that to Charles second, on the discovery of the Rye House plot, which had excited the renewed suspicions and persecutions of their opponents, they assert, that "God Almighty had taught and engaged them to acknowledge, and actually to obey magistracy as his ordinance;" in that to James second in 1686, asking for relief from oppression, they declare themselves "in Christian duty bound to pray for the King's welfare:" and in 1687, on that monarch's declaration for liberty of conscience, they express, in decided terms, their attachment to government, and profess, that it "would be their endeavour, (with God's help,) always to approve themselves the king's faithful and loving subjects," and they "pray God to bless the king, and that after a long and prosperous reign here, he may receive a better crown among the blessed."

They congratulated William third on the treaty of Ryswick, which confirmed his throne; and in their address on that occasion, avowed their belief, "that it is the Most High who ruleth in the kingdoms of men, and appointeth over them whomsoever He will;" and moreover, confessed it to be their "duty, gratefully to commemorate and acknowledge the favours 'of the government,' of which they had largely partaken."

In 1695, the representatives of the yearly meeting in England, when petitioning parliament for exemption from oaths, speak of "the just and good ends of law and government;" and in 1700, the yearly meeting, on the proclamation by the court of France of the pretender to the British throne, voluntarily offered to William third a profession of allegiance, wherein they acknowledge him to be "a Prince whom they believed God had promoted and principled for the good ends of government."

On the accession of Anne, they "sincerely declared that, with the assistance of the grace of God, they would always, according to their Christian duty, demonstrate their good affection, truth, and fidelity to the government." When the conspiracy of 1707, in favour of the pretender, was frustrated, they embraced that opportunity "to give the queen the renewed assurance of their hearty affection to the established government."

To conclude: during the government of George second, they freely renewed the same professions, and expressed emphatically, their desire "that those who were placed in authority might add vigour to the laws."

Such expressions as these, could have been adopted with sincerity, by no people who held civil government to be an evil, only to be tolerated because it could not be shaken off by means consistent with their religious profession. Friends had good reason to know that much iniquity was practised in the name of government and under the sanction of law, but they no more thought of therefore desiring the abolition of government and law, than they did of desiring the destruction of mankind, because mankind had in all ages been prone to evil.

Edward Burrough, a contemporary of Fox, and a minister highly respected in the society, when addressing Richard Cromwell, the "Protector of the Commonwealth," declares in express terms, that, "as for magistracy, it was ordained of God, to be a dread and terror and limit to evil doers, and to be a defence and praise to all that do well; to condemn the guilty, and to justify the guiltless; but that the exercise thereof was degenerated, and some that were in authority did subvert the good laws of God and men to a wrong end and use;" and he speaks of "how many of the Lord's servants do, and have suffered great injustice through the abuse of good government, and the degeneracy of magistracy from its perfect state, and place whereunto it was ordained of God in the beginning:" and in a book which he published in 1661, he goes on to say, that where any man's "heresy do extend further than only against God and his own soul, even to outward wrongs, or evils, or violence, or visible mischiefs committed to the injury of others, then he forbids not punishment to be inflicted upon the person and estate of such men."

But the deference paid by Friends to the authority of magistracy, is more fully exhibited in the remonstrance of Edward Pyot on behalf of himself, William Salt and George Fox, recorded in the journal of the latter, which was addressed "to John Glynne, Chief Justice of England," from the jail at Lancaster, where the above mentioned individuals were at that time, in the year 1656, imprisoned on account of their religious profession. He therein appeals to the law as "the one common guard or defence to property, liberty, and life:" as being established for the protection of those rights "so just and so equal," and which are of "the highest importance to the well-being of man." He demands of the Chief Justice, whether "they did not own authority and government oft times before the court;" and, says he, "didst thou not say in court, thou wast glad to hear so much from us of our owning magistracy." He tells him, that "pride, and fury, and passion, and rage, and reviling, and threatening are not the Lord's: these, and the principle out of which they spring, are for judgment, and must come under the sword of the magistrate of God;" and, he adds, "the law seeks not for causes whereby to make the innocent suffer; but helpeth him to right who suffers wrong, relieveth the oppressed, and searcheth out the matter, whether that of

which a man stands accused, be so, or no; seeking judgment, and hastening righteousness."

This remonstrance had the sanction of George Fox; but *he* expressed himself, in his own name, still more fully, on other occasions: as, for instance, in his address to Charles second, from Worcester prison, wherein he asserts that "that spirit which leads people from all manner of sin and evil, is one with the magistrate's power, and with the righteous law; for the law being added because of transgression, that spirit which leads out of transgression, must needs be one with that law which is against transgressors. So the spirit which leads out of transgression is the good spirit of Christ, and is one with the magistrates in the higher power, and owns it and them; but that spirit which leads into transgression, is the bad spirit, is against the law, against the magistrates, and makes them a great deal of troublesome work." So that, according to George Fox, one office of civil government is to promote the good work of the Holy Spirit. He avowed the same sentiments at Houlker Hall before Sir George Middleton, Justice Preston and others, one of whom accused him of being "against the laws of the land." He answered, "Nay; for I and my friends direct all people to the spirit of God in them, to mortify the deeds of the flesh; this brings them into well-doing, and from that which the magistrate's sword is against, which eases the magistrates, who are for the punishment of evil-doers; people being turned to the spirit of God, which brings them to mortify the deeds of the flesh from under the occasion for the magistrate's sword. This must needs be one with magistracy, and one with the law, which was added, because of transgression, and is for the praise of them that do well. In this we establish the law, are an ease to the magistrates, *and are not against, but stand for all good government.*"

Robert Barclay, in the fourteenth proposition of his Apology for the doctrines of Friends, announces their belief on this subject very distinctly, that it is not lawful for any whatsoever to undertake the government of conscience; nevertheless, "that no man, under the pretence of conscience, shall prejudice his neighbour in his life or estate, or do any thing destructive to, or inconsistent with, human society; in which case the law is for the transgressor, and justice is to be administered upon all, without respect of persons." And in his letter addressed to the Ambassadors of the Christian states at Nimeguen, in the year 1677, "to consult the peace of christendom," he makes a declaration which is exceedingly well adapted to our present purpose. He exhorts them not to be unwilling to hear one, that appeared among them for the interest of Christ his king and master, "not," said he, "as if thereby he denied the just authority of sovereign princes; or refused to acknowledge the subjection himself owes to his lawful prince and superior; or were any ways inclined to favour the dreams of such, as under the pretence of crying up King Jesus and the kingdom of Christ, either deny, or seek to overturn all civil government; nay, not at all: but I am one, who do reverence and honour magistrates, and acknowledge subjection due unto them by their respective people in all things just and lawful;

knowing that magistracy is an ordinance of God, and that magistrates are his ministers, who bear not the sword in vain." Barclay gave the most conclusive proof of the sincerity of his belief, by accepting the appointment of Governor for the colony of East Jersey, the duties of which office he exercised for two years by deputy.

That the Society of Friends were not averse to civil government, is evident, not only from the authorities already cited, but from the active part taken by many of its prominent and well esteemed members in the early settlement of New Jersey, nearly twenty years before the establishment of Penn's colony. Both East and West Jersey were under the control of Quaker proprietaries for a number of years; and their liberal political institutions have been a theme for the eulogy of historians; "there we lay a foundation," said the proprietaries of the latter colony, "for after ages to understand their liberty as men and Christians, that they may not be brought into bondage, but by their own consent: for we put the power in the people."

One of our most eloquent modern writers, who, while he has sadly mistaken some of the religious principles of our society, has done ample justice to its political influence, thus describes this community, associated upon principles, till then, practically, unknown to the administrators of government:—"The light of peace dawned upon west New Jersey; and in the autumn of 1681, Jennings, acting as governor for the proprietaries, convened the first legislative assembly of the representatives of the men who said *thee* and *thou* to all the world, and wore their hats in the presence of beggar or king. Their first measures established their rights by an act of fundamental legislation, and in the spirit of 'the concessions,' they framed their government on the basis of humanity. Neither faith, nor wealth, nor race, was respected. They met in the wilderness as men, and founded society on equal rights. The formation of this little government of a few hundred souls, that soon increased to thousands, is one of the most beautiful incidents in the history of the age. The people rejoiced under the reign of God, confident that he would beautify the meek with salvation. A loving correspondence began with Friends in England, and from the fathers of the sect, frequent messages were received. 'Friends that are gone to make plantations in America, keep the plantations in your hearts, that your own vines and lilies be not hurt. You that are governors and judges, eyes you should be to the blind, feet to the lame, and fathers to the poor; that you may gain the blessing of those who are ready to perish, and cause the widow's heart to sing with gladness. If you rejoice because your hand hath gotten much;—if you say to fine gold, thou art my confidence,—you will have denied the God that is above. The Lord is ruler among nations; he will crown his people with dominion.'

We will now proceed to notice, in a brief manner, the leading political principles of Penn, and his ideas of the object of civil government, and the method by which he made so happy an effort to realize them. William Penn was not a discoverer of new principles. He only endeavoured, under the influence of

religious benevolence, and the guidance of that Holy Spirit by which he acknowledged himself to be led, to reduce to practice those sacred precepts which had, by Divine revelation, long been made known to mankind, though the rulers of the nations had not heeded them, and worldly-minded politicians had only regarded them as pleasant, but impracticable, fancies. What was the pure and elevated influence under which Penn attempted this great and noble enterprise, may best be indicated by his own words. "Let the Lord guide me," said he, "by his wisdom, to honour his name, and serve his truth and people, that an example and a standard may be set up to the nations."—"God has given me an understanding of my duty, and an honest mind to do it uprightly."—"I shall not usurp the right of any, or oppress his person. God has furnished me with a better resolution, and has given me his grace to keep it."

Throughout the administration of the affairs of his colony, divested of all selfish and ambitious views, this was the high and holy Source to which he looked for wisdom to plan, and strength to persevere, and this was the secret of his unparalleled success. When the company of traders offered him a large sum of money and an annual revenue for a monopoly of the Indian traffic between the Delaware and Susquehanna, "which to the father of a family in straitened circumstances, was a great temptation," bound by his religion to equal laws, he rebuked the cupidity of monopoly. "I will not abuse the love of God," such was his decision; "nor act unworthy of his providence, by defiling what came to me clean." His was an example of civil government founded upon Christian principle; and a modern European writer, distinguished for the depth and extent of his researches into history, thus speaks of the success of his "Holy Experiment," as William Penn himself had termed it. "Of all the colonies that ever existed, none was established on so philanthropic a plan; none was more deeply impressed with the character of its founder; none displayed more, as it grew up, his principles of toleration, liberty, and peace, and none rose and flourished more rapidly than Pennsylvania. She was the last of the British colonies which was settled before the eighteenth century; but she soon exceeded most of her elder sisters in population, improvement, and general prosperity." His comprehensive design was, "not only to afford an asylum to his religious brethren against the persecutions with which they were still threatened, but also to establish a government adapted to his views and principles,"—"a civil society of men enjoying the highest possible degree of freedom and happiness; and to restore to them those lost rights and privileges with which God had originally blessed the human race." "I propose," said he, "that which is extraordinary—to leave myself and successors no power of doing mischief; that the will of one man may not hinder the good of a whole country." He trusted that a higher than human power would protect and guide the progress of his infant colony. "Our faith," he declared, "is for one another, that God will be our counsellor forever."

Yet Penn was an advocate for the "divine right" of secular power, and totally rejected the notion that civil society might be

maintained without its regulating influence; or that the divine law to which the heart of every man is required to bow, was intended to assume the office designed to be fulfilled by a judicious system of legislation. In the preamble to the "Frame of Government of the province of Pennsylvania," he asserts this right to be "settled," on Scripture authority "beyond exception, and that for two ends: first, to terrify evil-doers; secondly, to cherish those that do well; which gives government a life beyond corruption, and makes it as durable in the world, as good men should be, so that government seems to me a part of religion itself, a thing sacred in its institution and end. For, if it does not directly remove the cause, it crushes the effects of evil, and is as such, (though a lower, yet) an emanation of the same Divine Power, that is both author and object of pure religion," &c. "They weakly err, that think there is no other use of government, than correction, which is the coarsest part of it: daily experience tells us, that the care and regulation of many other affairs, more soft, and daily necessary, make up much the greatest part of government; and which must have followed the peopling of the world, had Adam never fell, and will continue among men on earth, under the highest attainments they may arrive at, by the coming of the blessed *second Adam*, the *Lord* from Heaven. Thus much," he says, "of government, as to its rise and end."

"For particular *frames* and *models*, it will become me to say little; and comparatively, I will say nothing. My reasons are:—

"*First*, that the age is too nice and difficult for it; there being nothing the wits of men are more busy and divided upon. It is true they seem to agree to the end, to wit, happiness; but in the means they differ as to divine, so to this human felicity; and the cause is much the same, not always want of light and knowledge, but want of using them rightly. Men side with their passions against their reason, and their sinister interests have so strong a bias upon their minds, that they lean to them against the good of the things they know.

"*Secondly*, I do not find a model in the world, that time, place, and some singular emergencies have not necessarily altered; nor is it easy to frame a civil government that shall serve all places alike.

"*Thirdly*, I know what is said by the several admirers of *monarchy*, *aristocracy* and *democracy*, which are the rule of one, a few, and many, and are the three common ideas of government, when men discourse on the subject. But I choose to solve the controversy with this small distinction, and it belongs to all three: any government is free to the people under it (whatever be the frame) where the laws rule, and the people are a party to those laws, and more than this is tyranny, oligarchy, or confusion.

"But, lastly: when all is said, there is hardly one frame of government in the world so ill designed by its first founders, that in good hands it would not do well enough; and story tells us, the best, in ill ones, can do nothing that is great or good; witness the *Jewish* and *Roman* states. Governments, like clocks, go from the motion men give them; and as governments are made and moved by men, so by them they are ruined too. Wherefore governments rather depend upon men, than men upon governments. *Let men*

be good, and the government cannot be bad ; if it be ill, they will cure it. But, if men be bad, let the government be never so good, they will endeavour to warp and spoil it to their turn.

"I know some say, let us have good laws, and no matter for the men that execute them : but let them consider, that though good laws do well, good men do better : for good laws may want good men, and be abolished or evaded by ill men ; but good men will never want good laws, nor suffer ill ones. It is true, good laws have some awe upon ill ministers, but that is where they have not power to escape or abolish them, and the people are generally wise and good : but a loose and depraved people (which is to the question) love laws and an administration like themselves. That, therefore, which makes a good constitution, must keep it, viz., men of wisdom and virtue, qualities that, because they descend not with worldly inheritances, must be carefully propagated by a virtuous education of youth ; for which after ages will owe more to the care and prudence of founders, and the successive magistracy, than to their parents for their private patrimonies."

"We have (with reverence to God, and good conscience to men) to the best of our skill, contrived and composed the *frame* and *laws* of this government, to the great end of all government, viz. : to support power in reverence with the people, and to secure the people from the abuse of power ; that they may be free by their just obedience, and the magistrates honourable, for their just administration ; for liberty without obedience is confusion, and obedience without liberty is slavery."

To recite the code of laws enacted by Penn and his fellow labourers, would be tedious and foreign to our purpose. The principles involved in some of them, new in legislation then, especially those relating to equal rights, have since, at least so far as white men are concerned, been pretty generally adopted in this country ; but others have been, and are greatly neglected or violated, to the serious detriment of good morals, the true welfare of the community, and to the great scandal of republican institutions. We will only notice a few of them.

First, with regard to electors, and candidates for election, it was provided, that "the elector that shall receive any reward or gift, in meat, drink, moneys, or otherwise, shall forfeit his right to elect ; and such person as shall, directly or indirectly, give, promise, or bestow, any such reward as aforesaid, to be elected, shall forfeit his election.

"That all officers in the service of the government, and all members of assembly, and all that have a right to elect such members, shall be such as profess faith in Jesus Christ, and *that are not convicted of ill-fame, or unsober and dishonest conversation*, and that are of twenty-one years of age, at least." Nevertheless, "all persons living in this province, who confess and acknowledge the one Almighty and eternal God, to be the Creator, upholder and ruler of the world ; and that hold themselves obliged in conscience to live peaceably and justly in civil society, shall, in no ways, be molested or prejudiced for their religious persuasion, or practice, in matters of faith and worship.

"That, according to the good example of the primitive Chris-

tians, and the ease of creation, every first day of the week, called the Lord's day, people shall abstain from their common daily labour, *that they may the better dispose themselves to worship God according to their understandings.*

"That all children, within this province, of the age of twelve years, shall be taught some useful trade or skill, to the end none may be idle, but the poor may work to live, and the rich, if they become poor, may not want.

"That all prisons shall be work-houses.

"That *all* trials shall be by twelve men, and, as near as may be, peers or equals, and of the neighbourhood, and men without just exception.

"That as a careless and corrupt administration of justice draws the wrath of God upon magistrates, so the wildness and looseness of the people provoke the indignation of God against a country: therefore, that all such offences against God, as, swearing, cursing, lying, profane talking, drunkenness,"—"and other uncleanness, (not to be repeated,) all treasons, rudeness,"—and "other violences, to the persons and estates of the inhabitants within this province; all prizes, stage-plays, cards, dice, May games, gamblers, masques, revels, bull-baitings, cock-fightings, bear-baitings, and the like, which excite the people to rudeness, cruelty, looseness, and irreligion, shall be respectively discouraged, and severely punished, according to the appointment of the Governor and freemen in provincial council and general assembly."

But Penn did not content himself with guarding the rights and morals of his own people; the privileges of the feeble Indian were also carefully secured. In the conditions, or "concessions," as they were termed, agreed upon with the adventurers and purchasers in the province, it was provided, "That no man shall, by any ways or means, in word or deed, affront, or wrong any Indian, but he shall incur the same penalty of the law, as if he had committed it against his fellow planter."

"That all differences, between the planter and the natives, shall be ended by twelve men, that is, by six planters and six natives; so that we may live friendly together, as much as in us lieth, preventing all occasions of heart-burnings and mischief."

"That the Indians shall have liberty to do all things relating to improvement of their ground, and providing sustenance for their families, that any of the planters shall enjoy."

These pledges were confirmed to the natives by treaty, and faithfully fulfilled under the administration of the proprietary. "Beneath a large elm-tree at Shakamaxon, on the northern edge of Philadelphia, William Penn, surrounded by a few Friends in the habiliments of peace, met the numerous delegation of the Lenni Lenape tribes—not for the purchase of lands, but, confirming what Penn had written, and Markham covenanted; his sublime purpose was the recognition of the equal rights of humanity. Under the shelter of the forest, now leafless by the frosts of autumn, Penn proclaimed to the men of the Algonquin race, the same simple message of peace and love which George Fox had professed before Cromwell, and Mary Fisher had borne to the Grand Turk."

“We meet”—such were the words of William Penn—“on the broad pathway of faith and good-will; no advantage shall be taken on either side, but all shall be openness and love. I will not call you children; for parents sometimes chide their children too severely; nor brothers only, for brothers differ. The friendship between me and you, I will not compare to a chain; for that the rains might rust or the falling tree might break. We are the same as if one man’s body were to be divided into two parts; we are all one flesh and blood.”

Such were the principles which lay at the foundation of the government of Penn. They were the result of his religious faith, which was, and continues to be, the faith of the Society of Friends; and is identical with that set forth in such plain and energetic language by the inspired writers of the New Testament; and how his colony was blessed under their influence, history attests in glowing terms.

In the autumn of 1683, “Philadelphia consisted of three or four little cottages; the conies were yet undisturbed in their hereditary burrows; the deer fearlessly bounded past glazed trees, unconscious of foreboded streets; the stranger that wandered from the river bank was lost in the thickets of the interminable forest; and, two years afterwards, the place contained about six hundred houses, and the school-master and the printing-press had begun their work. In three years from its foundation, Philadelphia gained more than New-York had done in half a century. This was the happiest season in the public life of William Penn. ‘I must without vanity, say’—such was his honest exultation—‘I have led the greatest colony into America that ever any man did upon a private credit, and the most prosperous beginnings that ever were in it, are to be found among us.’”

So much for the inspiring energy of Christianity applied to civil institutions. If the pretended political reformers of the present day would resort to that exhaustless fountain of healing and invigorating virtue, they would be more likely to bring back to us that reign of justice and mercy, and real prosperity, than by the wild and destructive measures they propose.

What saith the Scriptures? Let every soul be subject to the higher powers; for there is no power, but of God; the powers that be, are ordained of God; whosoever therefore resists the power, resists the ordinance of God; and they that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same; for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God; a revenger to execute wrath upon him that does evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake, whether it be to the king as supreme, or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well; for so is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.